

What is claimed is:

1. An ambulance cot load wheel assisting device, comprising:

a bracket frame configured to be fastened to a frame of the ambulance cot, said bracket frame having first and second vertically spaced axle mountings provided thereon;

an elongate first axle supported on said first axle mounting, said first axle having a first axis extending longitudinally thereof;

a first wheel member of a first diameter supported on said first axle for rotation about said first axis and configured to engage and roll on a floor of a cargo area of the ambulance;

an elongate second axle supported on said second axle mounting, said second axle having a second axis extending longitudinally thereof;

a second wheel-like member of a second diameter supported on said second axle for rotation about said second axis;

said first axle mounting and said first axis being oriented in a first horizontal plane spaced below a second horizontal plane containing said second axis supported by said second axle mounting, said first wheel member having a first diameter which is less than a second diameter of said second wheel-like member;

said second wheel-like member being configured to rotate in response to engagement of a periphery thereof with an edge of the floor of the cargo area upon entry movement of the ambulance cot into the cargo area to effect a lifting of the first horizontal plane to a location above the third horizontal plane if the first horizontal plane is initially oriented below the third horizontal plane.

2. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 1, wherein an amount of the lifting of said first horizontal plane will cause a periphery of said first wheel member to engage the edge in a fourth horizontal plane intersecting a radius of said first wheel member at a location that is intermediate of a length thereof.

3. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 2, wherein said intermediate location is in the range of 50% to 100% of a length thereof measured from said first axis.

4. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 1, wherein said bracket frame includes a positioning device for releasably holding said second wheel-like member in at least one position relative to said first axis.

5. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 4, wherein said positioning device is a detent mechanism.

6. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 5, wherein said detent mechanism includes at least one recess on said bracket frame and a spring urged locking member mounted on said second wheel-like member and configured to be received in said recess.

7. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 5, wherein said detent mechanism includes at least two arcuately spaced recesses on said bracket frame and a spring urged locking member mounted on said second wheel-like member and configured to be received in a selected one of said recesses.

8. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 1, wherein said bracket frame includes a pair of arcuately spaced stops to limit a range of motion of said second wheel-like member to be between said stops.

9. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 4, wherein said positioning device is a pair of pivotally connected links each pivotally connected at ends thereof remote from their pivotal connection to each other to a respective one of said bracket frame and said second wheel-like member, at least one of said links being extendable and contractible and continually resiliently urged toward an extended length thereof to cause said links to form an obtuse angle when said at least one link is in an extended position to hold said second wheel-like member in said at least one position relative to said first axis.

10. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 9, wherein said continual resilient urging is effected by a torsion spring urging said second wheel-like member toward said at least one position relative to said first axis.

11. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 9, wherein said continual resilient urging is effected by a compression spring provided on said at least one link.

12. The ambulance cot load wheel assisting device according to Claim 1, wherein said periphery of said second wheel-like member has a non-smooth surface.